



PRESS RELEASE

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USTR Portman to Attend APEC Meeting in Korea, June 2-3 Advancing Global Trade Negotiations, Combating Piracy and Counterfeiting on the Agenda

Portman to Also Travel to Beijing June 4

WASHINGTON – United States Trade Representative Rob Portman will join fellow Trade Ministers at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meetings in Cheju, Korea on June 2-3 to advance ongoing Doha Development Agenda negotiations in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and pursue cooperative solutions to stop on-line piracy and trade in counterfeit and pirated goods that threaten the competitiveness of the region's innovative economy. Following APEC, Portman will travel to Beijing on June 4 for meetings with Vice-Premier Wu Yi to discuss bilateral trade issues with China.

"As a dynamic economic region, APEC must continue to lead in promoting successful and ambitious outcomes in global trade negotiations," Portman said. "Our meeting in Korea comes at a critical juncture for the WTO, and I look forward to working with my Asia-Pacific colleagues to bring new energy and focus to the negotiations and to make strong progress this year in all areas, particularly agriculture, goods, services, trade facilitation and development. Concluding ambitious WTO negotiations in 2006 is a vital step toward realizing APEC's goal of free and open trade in the region and a critical part of the President's agenda to level the playing field and expand economic opportunities for American farmers, workers and businesses."

"Following APEC, I plan to join Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez in Beijing to meet with Chinese Vice-Premier Wu Yi. We face some serious challenges in our bilateral trade relationship with China. I look forward to addressing some of these challenges in my discussions in Beijing," said Portman.

In Korea, APEC Trade Ministers will also consider an initiative by the United States and Japan to strengthen efforts to combat trade in counterfeit and pirated goods, and on-line piracy that threaten livelihoods, health and safety across the Asia-Pacific region and

around the world. The initiative calls on APEC economies to work together to crack down on pirates and counterfeiters by upgrading laws and procedures for the digital age and establishing common guidelines to stop the import, export and transshipment of fake goods.

“Protecting ideas and innovation is critical for the economic competitiveness, growth and development of every Asia-Pacific economy,” Portman said. “Counterfeiters and pirates are increasingly using the Internet and global trading lanes to rob our manufacturers and entrepreneurs of the benefits of their designs, brands and inventions. This initiative is a vital opportunity for APEC to meet this growing challenge with strong and effective regional solutions.”

“The United States will be submitting its WTO revised services offer on May 31 and will urge all APEC Members who have not submitted revised offers to do so as soon as possible,” added Portman. A major part of achieving an overall balanced package of benefits in the Doha Round negotiations is producing commercially meaningful results in the services negotiations. With U.S. services industries providing 8 out of ten American jobs and accounting for one third of U.S exports, securing further global services liberalization is key to continuing U.S. economic growth.

During the APEC meeting, Portman will also meet separately with Trade Ministers from some of the 20 other APEC members to discuss bilateral, regional and WTO issues. The other APEC members are: Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

Background

Founded in 1989, APEC has been a vital engine for global trade and investment liberalization and facilitation and the driving force behind WTO initiatives on information technology and trade facilitation. In its first ten years, the APEC region generated more than 70 percent of global economic growth. APEC economies account for more than a third of the world's population, approximately 60 percent of world GDP and roughly 47 percent of global trade.

Through bold initiatives in the WTO, the United States has been a leader in pursuing free and open trade globally and in the APEC region. Within days of being sworn in, Portman attended a meeting of trade ministers in Paris where he played an instrumental role in facilitating a resolution of a contentious and important technical issue in the agriculture negotiations, which was necessary for the market access negotiation in agriculture to proceed.

The United States was the first WTO member to put forward a comprehensive agricultural trade reform proposal, calling for elimination of export subsidies, cuts of \$100 billion in annual allowed global trade-distorting domestic subsidies, and lowering average allowed global tariffs from 62 percent to 15 percent. The U.S. proposed

eliminating all tariffs on consumer and industrial goods in the WTO by 2015. And in services, the United States is working to remove foreign barriers in areas like financial services, telecom, express delivery, and energy that account for 80 percent of U.S. employment and 63 percent of the U.S. GDP.

The United States is reinforcing global trade liberalization with high quality, comprehensive free trade agreements (FTAs) with key trading partners around the world. The United States has FTAs in force with five countries in the Asia-Pacific region (Canada, Mexico, Chile, Singapore and Australia) and is negotiating with two others (Peru and Thailand). U.S. FTAs go well beyond WTO commitments by establishing strong and enforceable rules in areas such as trade facilitation, electronic commerce, investment, intellectual property rights, and government procurement.

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